

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A build-to-order manufacturing facility comprising:

- 5 a kitting facility where components are collected for a specific order for a specific customer;
- an on-site server that contains a software product required by the specific order for the specific customer;
- a build cell that receives the components from the kitting facility;
- 10 a build station in the build cell, where the components are assembled into a computer in response to a specific order for a specific customer;
- a burn station in the build cell that receives the computer from the build station;
- 15 a first network connection in the burn station that links the computer in the build cell with the on-site server, such that the software product can be transferred from on the on-site server to the computer in the build cell via the first network connection, in accordance with
- 20 the specific order for the specific customer;
- a finishing station that receives the computer from the burn station after the software product has been transferred to the computer from on the on-site server;
- 25 a supplemental network connection in the finishing station that links the computer in the build cell with an off-site server that contains proprietary software of the specific customer, such that the proprietary software of the specific customer can be transferred from the off-site server to the computer in the build cell via the
- 30 supplemental network connection; and

a boxing facility where the computer is packaged after the proprietary software of the specific customer has been transferred to the computer from the off-site server.

2. A build-to-order manufacturing facility comprising:

a build cell where components are assembled into a computer in response to a specific order for a specific customer;

a first network connection that links the computer in the build cell with an on-site server, such that data from the on-site server can be transferred to the computer in the build cell via the first network connection, in accordance with the specific order for the specific customer; and

a supplemental network connection that links the computer in the build cell with an off-site server containing proprietary data of the specific customer, such that the proprietary data of the specific customer can be transferred from the off-site server to the computer in the build cell via the supplemental network connection.

3. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, wherein the supplemental network connection facilitates transference of proprietary software of the specific customer from the off-site server to the computer in the build cell.

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4. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, wherein the supplemental network connection facilitates transference of predetermined configuration settings from the off-site server to the computer in the build cell.

5. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, wherein the data in the on-site server comprises software to be transferred to the computer in accordance with the specific order for the specific customer.

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6. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, further comprising:

a burn station in the build cell that includes the first network connection.

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7. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, wherein: the supplemental network connection comprises a data port of a satellite link to the off-site server.

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8. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, further comprising:

a finishing station in the build cell that includes the supplemental network connection.

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9. The manufacturing facility of Claim 8, wherein the finishing station accommodates the computer during transference of the proprietary data of the specific customer from the off-site server to the computer.

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10. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, further comprising the on-site server.

11. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, further comprising:

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a boxing facility where the computer is packaged.

12. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, further comprising:

a kitting facility where the components are collected.

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13. The manufacturing facility of Claim 2, further comprising:

a shipping facility where the computer is tendered to a carrier for shipment to the specific customer.

14. A build cell for assembling computers and loading data into the computers according to specific customer orders, the build cell comprising:

5 a build station where components are assembled into a computer in response to a specific order for a specific customer;

a burn station in the build cell that receives the computer from the build station;

10 a first network connection that links the computer in the build cell with an on-site server, such that data from the on-site server can be transferred to the computer in the build cell via the first network connection, in accordance with the specific order for the specific customer; and

15 a supplemental network connection that links the computer in the build cell with an off-site server containing proprietary data of the specific customer, such that the proprietary data of the specific customer can be transferred from the off-site server to the
20 computer in the build cell via the supplemental network connection.

15. The build cell of Claim 14, wherein the supplemental network connection facilitates transference
25 of proprietary software of the specific customer from the off-site server to the computer in the build cell.

16. The build cell of Claim 14, wherein the supplemental network connection facilitates transference of predetermined configuration settings from the off-site server to the computer in the build cell.

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17. The build cell of Claim 14, wherein the first network connection facilitates transference of software from the on-site server to the computer.

10 18. The build cell of Claim 14, further comprising a burn station that includes the first network connection.

15 19. The build cell of Claim 14, further comprising:
a finishing station that includes the supplemental network connection;

wherein the supplemental network connection comprises a data port of a satellite link to the off-site server; and

20 wherein the finishing station accommodates the computer during transference of the proprietary data of the specific customer from the off-site server to the computer.

20. An assembly unit for assembling computers and loading data into the computers according to specific customer orders, the assembly unit comprising:

5 a build cell where components are assembled into a computer in response to a specific order for a specific customer;

10 a first network connection that links the computer in the build cell with an on-site server, such that data from the on-site server can be transferred to the computer in the build cell via the first network connection, in accordance with the specific order for the specific customer; and

15 a supplemental network connection that links the computer in the build cell with an off-site server containing proprietary data of the specific customer, such that the proprietary data of the specific customer can be transferred from the off-site server to the computer in the build cell via the supplemental network connection.